

New Way of Reading the Bible,

According to the Three

Norfolk Clergy-Men,

THOSE

Champions against the Q U A K E R S.

Edward Beekham, D. D. and Rector of
Gayten-Thorpe.

Henry Meriton, Rector of Oxborough.

Lancaster Topcliffe, L. B. sometimes Sen.

Fell. of Gon. and Caius College, Cambridge.

} Norfolk.

Infer'd from an Instance of Theirs, in a Book Entituled,

A Brief Discovery of some of the Blasphemous and Seditious Principles and Practices of the People called Quakers, taken out of their most noted and approved Authors: Humbly Offered to the Consideration of the King and both Houses of Parliament.

UPon sight whereof I was curious to peruse a Book that carried so rare and extraordinary a Title: And to be brief in my Observation thereupon, shall only consider their first Paragraph, and therein shew how Egregiously these Scholars and Divines stumble at the Threshold: And that I may be just to them, take the Paragraph at large; a Justice they have not observed to-

wards the *Quakers*; They say, "George Fox, the first Founder, and great Apostle of this Sect, *Great Mystery*, Pag. 209. "saith against his Opponent thus, This Light, that doth "enlighten every one that cometh into the World, which "he (*viz.* G. F.'s Opponent) calls *Conscience*, is not Con- "science. And in Pag. 331. (*G. F.* farther saith). The "Light which every one that cometh into the World is "enlightned withal, is *Not Conscience*; for the Light was "before any thing was made, or *Conscience* named. And again, to aggravate the supposed Blasphemy upon them, they make this Marginal Note, *viz.* The *Quakers* teach, that the Light within, by which they are guided, is not *Conscience*.

Now this being in the Front of their Book, to be sure it was not intended for one of the least of the *Quakers* Blasphemies; though they might as well have called it Sedition (the other Crime they lay to their Charge) as to make it Blasphemy, to say, That the Light within is *not Conscience*. But if this be Blasphemy, pray let us hear how the Scripture will Read after their new way of Translating *Conscience* for *Light*, which the *Quakers*, according to the Holy Evangelist, &c. call Christ, and they call *Conscience*. *John* 1. 4, 9. In him (meaning the Divine Word) was Life, and the Life was the *Conscience* of Men: And the *Conscience* shineth in *Darkness*, and the *Darkness* comprehendeth it not. There was a Man sent from God, whose Name was John, the same came for a Witness, to bear witness of the *Conscience*, that all Men through him might believe. He was not that *Conscience*, but was sent to bear witness of that *Conscience*: That was the true *Conscience*, that lighteth every Man that cometh into the World. *John* 8. 12. I am the *Conscience* of the World, he that followeth me, shall not walk in *Darkness*, but shall have the *Conscience* of Life. And also, 1 *John* 1. 5, 6, 7, 8. This then is the Message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, That God is *Conscience*, and in him is no *Darkness* at all: If we say we have fellowship with him, and

and walk in Darknes, we Lye, and do not the Truth; but if we walk in the Conscience, as he is in the Conscience, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus-Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin. Again, Rom. 13. 12. Put on the Armour of Conscience. Lest the Conscience of the Glorious Gospel, &c. 2 Cor. 4. 4. God, who commanded the Conscience to shine out of Darknes, hath shined in our Hearts, to give us the Conscience of the Knowledge, &c. 2 Cor. 4. 6. Lastly, The Nations of them that are saved shall walk in the Conscience of the Lamb.

But to read those Scripture Quotations truly, leave out the word *Conscience*, and read the word *Light* instead thereof.

It is to be lamented, that Men that wear so Religious a Character, and would pass for the *Key* and *Keepers* of the Holy Scripture to the People, should be so much too hard for themselves, by letting their Mistake of the *Quakers* Principles carry them into so great an abuse of the Scriptures, as to be guilty of the Crime they would fasten upon them; as certainly they all are, who degrade the *Divine Light* of Christ, in alledging it to be *Conscience*, which may as well be *Blind* and *Defiled*, as *Knowing* and *Pure*.

Besides, it is to be admired, that these *Three Clergy-Men*, who by vertue of their Function, are obliged frequently to read the *Common-Prayer*, should be ignorant of a Principle so Emphatically Exprest therein, as may be read in that Book, viz. *The Gospel on Christmas Day. The Collect. on John the Evangelist, and the Epistle on the same Day, with the Collects on Whitsunday and Munday*; and many other places, too tedious to mention, considering my intended Brevity. And why they should Brand the *Quakers*, that agree with the *Church of England* in so great a Principle, I know not, unless in Reallity they are not what their Character bespeaks them to be.

FINIS.